

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/815,657

Examiner

Steven R Garland

Applicant(s)

HARAKAWA ET AL.

Art Unit

2125

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the papers filed 4/2/04.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 14-16, 19 renumbered respectively 1-4.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 02 April 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/606173.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) ✓
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), ✓
Paper No./Mail Date 4/2/04
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Kuesters on 9/14/04.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claim 15, line 2, change "claim14" to -- claim 14 --.

Claim 19, lines 7-8, delete ",which is received by the skip judgment request received in the skip judgment request receiving step".

Claim 19, line 8, change "plug-in" to -- plug-ins --.

Claim 19, line 8, change "each the" to -- each --.

In the specification:

Please change the paragraph at page 1, lines 5-9 to read as follows:

-- This application is a division of and claims the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. 120 from U.S. Serial No. 09/606,173, filed June 29,2000, now U.S. Patent 6,745,094, and claims the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. 119 of Japanese Patent Application No. H11-186523, filed on June 30, 1999, the entire contents of which are incorporated herein by reference. --

In the abstract:

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Replace the abstract with the following abstract.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A semiconductor processing process control system comprising a skip judgment request receiving section for receiving a request for judgment as to whether a process can be skipped or not. A skip judgment yes/no section searches for a judgment plug-in corresponding to the process to be skipped and a judgment execute section activates the judgment plug-in to make a judgment as to whether the process can be skipped or not on the basis of skip judgment logic in the plug-in. A skip execute section effects skipping of the process if the judgment determines that the process can be skipped. -- .

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2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Harakawa 6,505,090 and Morimoto 5,898,588 are of interest in skipping.

However in regards to claim 19, the prior art fails to teach or suggest the claimed combination of a search for a judgment plug-in corresponding to the process to be skipped and a judgment execute step activates the judgment plug-in to make a judgment as to whether the process can be skipped or not on the basis of skip judgment logic in the plug-in and a skip execute step which effects skipping of the process if the judgment determines that the process can be skipped. Similar comments apply to claim 14 and its dependent claims.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Steven R Garland whose telephone number is 703-305-9759, after 10/13/04 at 571-272-3741. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 to 5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Leo Picard, can be reached on 703-308-0538 after 10/12/04 at (571)272-

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3749. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

snb

STEVEN GARLAND



LEO PICARD
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100

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